

Spitfire News

for the latest communications news, views and comment

WINTER 2014/15

Spitfire wins CN Award for SIP Communicator™ hosted solution again!

Spitfire has won the Best Hosted Platform category at the prestigious Comms National Awards. Spitfire won the award for its SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service. Last year Spitfire won the SME Hosted Solution category of the Comms National Awards also for an entry for SIP Communicator™. The Comms National Awards, organised by Comms Dealer magazine, are widely acknowledged as the benchmark of excellence within the telecoms industry.

The cloud based SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service only requires SIP compatible handsets, making the service an extremely cost-effective solution for business start-ups and small businesses that are growing and anticipate moving premises or are spread over multiple sites.

Spitfire was also 'Highly Commended' for our entry in the Best ISP category for the wide portfolio of highly competitive connectivity solutions including VDSL Fibre Broadband, ADSL, ADSL Annex M, SDSL and Ethernet over copper and fibre allied with a strong customer service support ethic independently endorsed by our Partners and customers.

The Comms National Awards celebrate and reward excellence in the provision of ICT solutions. The Awards are judged by an independent panel of industry experts and Spitfire's winning and highly commended entries were chosen ahead of other finalists and many more entries that failed to make finalist status.

For Spitfire, Tom Fellowes, Sales Director commented, "We are elated to have won a prestigious Comms National Award for SIP Communicator™ for the second year running and to be 'Highly Commended' for our Best ISP entry. Last year

we won an award for SIP Communicator™ for a specific customer solution but this year we have won the Best Hosted Platform category outright.

Clearly the judges recognised that SIP Communicator™ has some significant advantages over rival services. Because Spitfire is a business ISP our SIP Communicator™ platform is designed as an end-to-end service to guarantee Quality of Service (QoS) and call quality overcoming one of the biggest objections to moving to cloud

based telephony. Our second Comms National Award shows that SIP Communicator™ is a winning solution for customers."



Nick, Susie and Tom from Spitfire receiving the CNA award



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Foreword

by Justin Orde

Joint Managing Director



We have some terrific news to celebrate in this issue with our SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service scooping a Comms National Award.

This is the second year in a row that SIP Communicator™ has won a Comms National Award and I'm delighted to report that Spitfire was also 'Highly Commended' in the Best ISP category.

SIP Communicator™ is a cloud based Voice over IP service at the cutting-edge of technical sophistication and delivered over our own network so we can guarantee end-to-end service delivery.

Increasingly it is our expertise in IP Engineering that sets Spitfire apart from rivals. If you're not familiar with the intricacies of 'Internet Protocol' I should explain that it is the communications technology that underpins virtually all private data networks (or LANs) and the public Internet. Voice over IP (or VoIP) is also gradually replacing traditional telephony signalling technology for public voice telephony communications. Consequently expertise and mastery of IP Engineering is essential for future innovation and development in business communications.

Spitfire's IP Engineering team, led by our Director of IP Engineering, Graham Lewis, ensures that we are leaders, innovators and award winners in this critical area of advanced technology. The benefit to you is that Spitfire can provide IP services which are more sophisticated, with greater reliability and at a better price than competitors.

We look forward to meeting your business communication needs in the IP based world of 2015.



FREE connection and FREE router on new broadband orders

We're offering FREE connection and a FREE router on Premium broadband services. The offer includes new orders for ADSL 2+, VDSL Fibre Broadband, Annex M and SDSLM circuits. The free connection saving is worth up to £169.

Spitfire can provide customers with access to the UK's widest range of market leading, competitively priced connectivity options including ADSL, SDSL, VDSL Fibre Broadband and Ethernet over copper and fibre. A whole spectrum of contention rates is available including one to one. There is also a range of low cost back-up solutions to ensure resilience and business continuity where constant broadband connection is essential.

For Spitfire, Susie Ward, Marketing & HR Director comments, "This is an excellent chance for business customers to migrate to high-speed internet for accessing cloud based services, applications and storage. As a dedicated business ISP we back all our broadband products with market leading service level agreements."

The time limited offer is subject to terms and conditions. Check for latest details by calling 020 7501 3333.

Nortel BCM reaches 'end-of-life'

We have been notified that the Nortel BCM phone system has reached 'end-of-life' and that spare parts are no longer manufactured for the product. We know that many customers still have a Nortel BCM system which has met their business communication needs for many years and are reluctant to upgrade while the system performs perfectly well.

Unfortunately in terms of functionality and connectivity the Nortel BCM belongs to another era so many customers could make real savings and productivity gains by migrating to one of the new platforms available. As an independent communications provider, we can analyse customer needs and propose a solution from a range of choices that can best meet business requirements. This could include a replacement IP telephony system from leading manufacturers of the latest 'unified communication' solutions including Avaya and 3CX. Spitfire can supply such systems installed on the customer's premises or hosted remotely by Spitfire.

Alternatively our SIP Communicator™ cloud-based telephony service provides phone system functionality remotely and only requires SIP compatible handsets, making the service an extremely cost-effective solution.

If you are currently using a Nortel BCM system and would like to discuss replacement options please call us on 020 7501 3333.



Why QoS

By Graham Lewis –
Director IP Engineering

Quality of Service (QoS) is the term given to a range of techniques used to guarantee levels of service for certain types of traffic in the event of insufficient resources in the network being available. Good quality Voice over IP (VoIP) has certain technical requirements that are different to normal Internet browsing use and QoS can ensure that voice traffic is handled in a way that meets these requirements.

The actual techniques used can include packet identification and marking coupled with deploying different router queuing algorithms. There is no one thing that “is QoS” that can be turned on or off though often that is the impression given in order to simplify the issue. You may hear people say “that has QoS” or “this is QoS enabled” without any further explanation. The details are necessarily complex but it is worth asking exactly what it is that is being done.

If there was enough high speed bandwidth end to end to cope with all user demands then there would be no need for QoS. However for most customers there are three “pinch points” where there may be insufficient bandwidth. At these points there is a need to do something to protect voice quality and this is where QoS comes in.

For most businesses the first “pinch point” is where their high speed LAN connects to a lower speed WAN service. LANs today typically run at 100-1000Mbps while a WAN service will be an order of magnitude slower. A voice service needs access to a guaranteed amount of bandwidth even



when other services are heavily used. This is achieved by configuring the customer router to dedicate bandwidth for voice traffic if the WAN link becomes congested by restricting other data.

The second “pinch point” is on the carrier’s network across the country between the Telephone Exchange and the Service Provider. This network carries all the traffic from millions of Internet users and is commonly provisioned to meet the requirements of Internet browsing.

The third “pinch point” is the circuit between the Exchange and the customer’s premises where the carrier and the Service Provider must ensure that there is sufficient dedicated bandwidth for the customer’s desired priority traffic. This is an area which is frequently overlooked.

Voice traffic has special needs, in particular low latency and low variation in latency (called jitter) are essential. To achieve these the network provider must deploy QoS mechanisms on their entire national backbone network to meet these performance requirements. They are not normally available on standard broadband circuits. Spitfire has been a leader in developing a range of “voice approved” services that have performance targets backed by service level agreements.

On a normal broadband service for example if voice quality is poor then the

provider will not investigate the issue so long as the service is adequate for Internet access use. Many customers report that normal Internet circuits are adequate for voice most of the time and cannot see the need for a special circuit, until that performance deteriorates at peak times or the provider’s network starts to increase data use.

Spitfire run an uncontended core network always ensuring that we have enough bandwidth to meet demand. We offer a range of WAN circuits that have Service Level Guarantees making them suitable for VoIP. Our IP engineering team offer skilled configuration services to create QoS policies that ensure a quality service. All traffic over our SIP trunks and award winning SIP Communicator™ is monitored for call quality.

Spitfire mainly deploy QoS to guarantee voice quality on converged networks (mixed voice and data) but for some customers their mix of traffic is different and they have requirements to prioritise other applications. For these customers we develop customised QoS policies that guarantee bandwidth for the particular applications that are important to them which could be a financial application, video conferencing or remote desktop type services.

At Spitfire we have always believed that Voice over IP should be delivered as “business quality”. We have crafted products that use QoS to ensure that telephone calls are the best they can be. Other providers are happy to let customers use normal Internet connections and let them sort out any poor quality audio issues. Our approach has been to provide an end to end service where we can guarantee voice quality and if it does fall below standard we can resolve the issue.

Spitfire is
3CX Premium
Partner



Spitfire has achieved Premium Partner status with 3CX, suppliers of the Windows based IP PBX that replaces a proprietary hardware PBX. 3CX’s IP phone system has been developed specifically for Microsoft Windows and is based on the SIP standard.

The new Premium Partner status is in recognition of Spitfire’s engineering skills and support levels for the 3CX ‘soft switch’ platform. Spitfire is a 3CX supported SIP trunk provider, with Spitfire SIP trunk configuration built into the latest release of 3CX software.

Triple Ethernet offer worth up to £7,700!

Spitfire has launched a Triple Ethernet Offer with total possible savings of up to £7,700 based on:

- **Free connection worth £1,900**
- **Excess charges paid worth £2,800**
- **SuperConnected Cities vouchers worth up to £3,000**

'SuperConnected Cities' is a government backed programme providing up to £3,000 towards business customer installation costs for Ethernet connections in 22 cities across the UK. To be eligible

business customers must have less than 250 employees, a turnover less than £40m, and must require a circuit which is 20Mbps or faster. Since promoting the scheme Spitfire regularly feature in the top 10 supplier list, and are currently 3rd in the London listing. New to the scheme are the pre-registered supplier packages of which Spitfire are one of only twenty suppliers asked to take part. These packages make the approval process even faster as they are already pre-approved and save customers having to seek initial approval from the councils themselves.

Spitfire Ethernet services provide a dedicated high speed, uncontended, full duplex symmetrical bandwidth solution that has lower overhead, greater throughput and higher reliability than all types of broadband (VDSL/ADSL/SDSL) services. This makes the service highly attractive for those customers requiring high quality, resilient connectivity for VoIP and other UC applications including SIP trunks.

Tom Fellowes, Sales Director, states: "For customers in major metropolitan areas this is a great opportunity to benefit from Ethernet connectivity. We know from experience that once customers install Ethernet they are able to access a range of cloud based services such as hosted telephony, storage and applications, which cut costs and raise productivity. This is a time limited offer so customers should contact us as soon as possible."



Additional functionality added to SIP Communicator™ hosted service

There are some significant additions to the Spitfire SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service making it even more attractive to potential users. The service is now available with call recording and call logging functionality as optional third-party applications.

Ad hoc call recording is at the touch of a button on the user's handset or can



be configured for all calls subject to preference. This is ideal for businesses that have either a legal requirement to record calls or need to do so for training purposes.

The call logging provides a dashboard style graphic representation of call data. It is easy to use to generate a variety of management reports on service usage and costs. Because it is cloud based it can be accessed from wherever an authorised administrator has access to the Internet.

A new softphone 'app' for SIP Communicator™ has also been launched which can be downloaded to a mobile device so it can be used as an extension of the service. This can be easily installed on a mobile device including iPhone and Android smart phones, allowing the device to integrate with the SIP Communicator™ service.



Users can benefit from having access to desk phone features on their mobile phones. For example they are able to transfer calls, make conference calls and have access to a central directory, all from their mobile device. It also allows mobile users to use short-number and extension dialling just as if they were using standard features from their desk phones.

The new app addresses the demand for fixed-mobile convergence stimulated by the 'bring your own device' phenomenon where a growing number of users want to use their mobile as their terminal of choice for all business telephony.



New whitepaper explains the phone number maze for business

Graham Lewis MSc MIET MBCS, our Director of IP Engineering at Spitfire, has produced a whitepaper on how to choose the right phone number for a business. The whitepaper explains the importance of number selection in creating the right impression of an organisation for callers. It covers the choices now available in terms of both geographic and non-geographic numbers and the pros and cons of the different non-geographic prefixes (03, 05, 07, 08 and 09).

The whitepaper also details the recent changes to Ofcom regulations which mean that 084 and 087 prefix numbers can no longer be used for customer service or complaint lines. Graham also explains how, “even the smallest of businesses can have multiple geographic numbers even if they don’t have a physical presence in that area”.

As an Interconnected Fixed Line Operator and one of only 29 CPS Operators in the UK, Spitfire can offer our business customers’ number ranges on all UK dialling codes, together with non-geographic number ranges. We’re also involved with Ofcom at industry level in the development of future interconnect and number porting arrangements between Openreach and the telecoms industry.

Graham states, “Selecting the right contact number can have a major impact on the commercial success of businesses. There’s a lot of confusion in the business community about the various non-geographic number prefixes.

Many businesses also don’t appreciate that the latest number porting technology means that a business in Plymouth can have an Inverness area phone number if that’s what they want. This whitepaper clarifies these important options.”

The whitepaper is free to download at: www.spitfire.co.uk

Annual partner conference has BT Wholesale keynote speaker

The annual Spitfire channel partner conference was held earlier this year with around 100 partner delegates attending. They heard a keynote speech by Steve Best, Managing Director at BT Wholesale for Product Management & Regulation. Steve outlined BT Wholesale’s plans for increased connectivity options. Delegates also heard from Spitfire staff including Justin Orde (Joint Managing Director), Tom Fellowes (Sales Director), Nick Goodenough (Partner Service Manager) and Peter Goddard (Manager, Midlands Office).

Presentations covered latest developments in data connectivity for broadband and Ethernet. Voice solutions including SIP trunks and SIP Communicator™, Spitfire’s hosted telephony service, were also discussed. For converged solutions partners heard details of Spitfire’s innovative DualStream® SF (Synthetic Fibre) combining a fibre circuit for data connectivity with a 2Mb SDSL circuit for Voice over IP. Should either circuit fail then the voice or data traffic will automatically failover to the other circuit to ensure resilience for voice telephony and data, with failback also happening automatically on the circuit coming back up.

Presentations were followed by lunch and networking for the delegates. For Spitfire, Nick Goodenough commented, “It was a terrific turnout with channel partners coming from as far away as the north of Scotland. We wanted to raise awareness in our channel of the huge opportunities they now have to upgrade their customers to Ethernet, SIP trunks and SIP Communicator™ with enormous growth taking place with all these new technologies. The feedback received in our networking session proved to be very valuable and demonstrated to us that we are moving our partners in the right direction.”



Telephony – the choice is yours

There are now three principal ways to provide telephony services for an enterprise. Here we look at the pros and cons of the options available.

PBX (Private Branch Exchange)

This is the traditional route for providing telephony services with a phone system box located on the customer's premises and proprietary handsets on each user's desk. The cost of proprietary handsets which are unique to the PBX system can make this an expensive option. Spitfire supplies and maintains PBX systems manufactured by Avaya and Panasonic. Almost all modern PBX systems use IP signalling and so can use the enterprise's LAN cabling instead of requiring separate wiring.

Most PBX systems can also be configured so that calls come to a central operator who then routes calls to the correct recipient. This may be an automated assistant with prompts ("press 1 for sales" and so on). More usually calls come in directly to DDI (direct dial inward) numbers and can be transferred if needed.

PBX systems are very reliable and provide control of the technology on the customer's premises. But this is also a limitation – if there is an accident or disaster at the customer's premises, the enterprise's access to telephony services is disrupted. To mitigate this Spitfire offers a PBX hosting service where the hardware for the PBX system is located in one of our secure network nodes with IP circuit connection to the customer's premises.

PBX systems are normally leased or purchased outright, involving a considerable amount of initial capital expenditure, with only a proportion being a tax deductible business expense. There is also a monthly maintenance charge.

Software system

With a software system telephony functionality is provided by a software package hosted on a server at the customer's premises. Such a solution tends to be cheaper than a traditional hardware based PBX system and can often be used with non-proprietary handsets. Spitfire can supply the 3CX Windows based IP software solution that has been developed specifically for Microsoft Windows and is based on the SIP standard. Spitfire is a 3CX supported SIP trunk provider, with Spitfire SIP trunk configuration built into the latest release of 3CX software.

Being software based such systems are highly configurable by an authorised administrator, providing greater control and flexibility, but this requires some degree of IT literacy. Being located on the customer premises can raise business continuity issues, but again Spitfire can host the system in one of our core network nodes for maximum resilience.

Cloud based telephony

Cloud based telephony provides functionality remotely, so only a router and SIP compatible handsets need to be provided at the customer's premises. In fact users can log-in to the service from virtually anywhere so home workers or workers in different locations can call each other free of public network charges and incoming calls can be routed to any location. Remote access to the service also overcomes all issues regarding business continuity.

Spitfire's award-winning SIP Communicator™ is a hosted telephony service that is ideal for business start-ups and small businesses that are growing and anticipate moving premises because relocating the service is a simple 'plug and play' procedure. SIP Communicator™ requires minimal capital expenditure as billing is based on a monthly service

charge which is tax deductible and the costs are generally about fifty per cent less than a conventional phone system.

SIP Communicator™ provides a highly resilient solution and is ideal for business continuity as the system can be configured to auto-fail over to alternative telephone numbers such as mobiles, should there be a power cut or other failure.

We have recently introduced increased functionality for SIP Communicator™ including third-party solutions for call logging, call recording and mobile device integration. Details can be found elsewhere in this issue.

If you would like advice on the best telephony solution for your organisation please contact us on 020 7501 3333.

Almost all modern PBX systems use IP signalling and so can use the enterprise's LAN cabling instead of requiring separate wiring.

Let Spitfire be your host

Did you know that Spitfire offers a complete email management and web hosting service? Allowing us to manage your email can provide significant cost, security and business continuity benefits. We can also provide anti-virus solutions to protect your IT infrastructure including anti-virus security for the latest smart phone and tablet devices.

We offer a full, secure hosting service for websites and registration or transfer for all UK web domain names including .com .org .net and .uk domains. To find out more contact us on 020 7501 3333.





Spitfire SIP Communicator™ is just what the doctor ordered

Millbrook Medical Conferences was established by Managing Director, Fiona Legate and now the company has over 25 years of experience in organising medical conferences and events in the UK. Because of continued expansion the company recently moved premises to 'The Red House' a character building in Lutterworth High Street, Leicestershire.

As part of the move the company reviewed its telephony communications provision. Fiona explains, "We wanted to look at the possibility of home working for part of the week for me and possibly other staff. I also didn't want to pay the earth for a new phone system on top of all the other moving costs. We talked to IT Services Support who provide us with IT consultancy and they suggested we consider a hosted telephony service."

IT Services Support serves businesses in all sectors and of all sizes, providing IT solutions that range from the individual desktop through to full networked server installations. IT Services Support recommended SIP Communicator™, Spitfire's hosted telephony service. The development of high-speed Ethernet and broadband circuits means a new generation of hosted IP phone services are now offering a high level of flexibility and financing benefits over acquiring traditional phone systems.

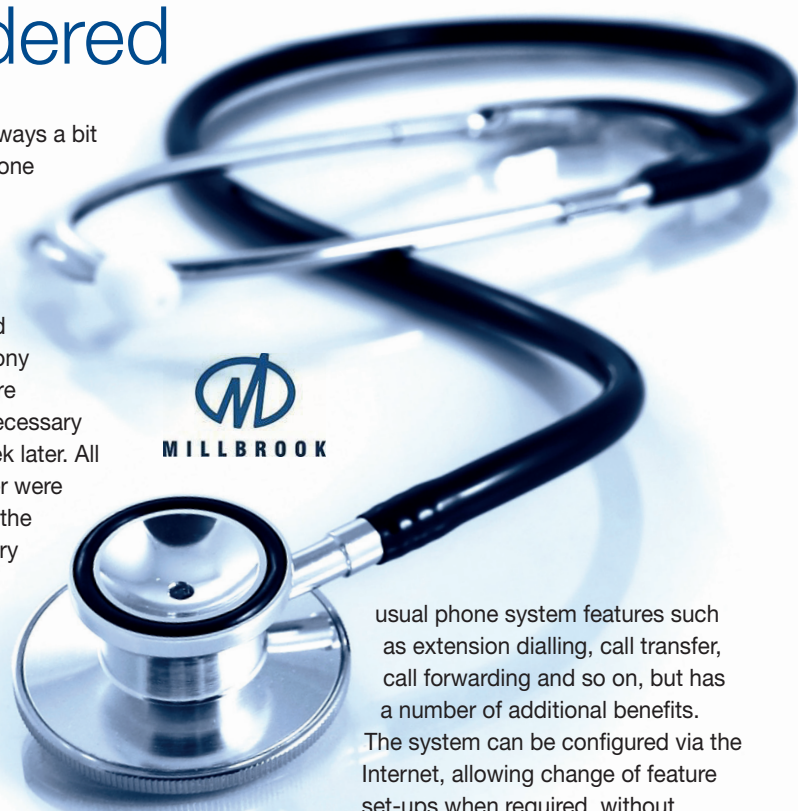
Designed as an end-to-end service, SIP Communicator™ is ideal for businesses such as Millbrook Medical Conferences because where a company has home workers or workers in different locations, staff can call each other free of public network charges and incoming calls can be routed to any location.

"Moving premises is always a bit of an ordeal but the phone service set-up was one thing I didn't have to worry about", says Fiona. "Spitfire installed the broadband connection and telephony circuit four weeks before our move and all the necessary hardware arrived a week later. All the handsets and router were clearly labelled up and the implementation was very straightforward. It was really simple to set-up and everything went as planned with the help of IT Services Support, so we were making and taking calls on the first morning." Spitfire can supply SIP compatible handsets from a number of vendors which are supplied together with a router. Deployment is 'plug-and-play' with the router simply plugged into the customer's network. Most SIP Communicator™ installs are up and running in under an hour.



"It's certainly not a complicated system to use", Fiona continues. "But while it's easy to use it has all the features you could want. We've only just scratched the surface of the service's capabilities and want to start using the system's conference calling facility."

SIP Communicator™ offers all the



SIP Communicator™ is ideal for businesses such as Millbrook Medical Conferences

usual phone system features such as extension dialling, call transfer, call forwarding and so on, but has a number of additional benefits.

The system can be configured via the Internet, allowing change of feature set-ups when required, without incurring any on-site engineering charges. Multiple hunt groups can be set up for incoming calls to ring telephones simultaneously or sequentially across a number of locations. The system uses a Spitfire SIP circuit connected to the hosted SIP Communicator™ service. In the unlikely event that SIP circuits go down, or there is a power cut on site then all numbers are instantly diverted through to individual mobiles so calls can continue to be received.

"We've already noticed cost-savings compared to our previous telephony provision", Fiona confirms. "The SIP Communicator™ service means we only need one phone line now. We have six extensions on the service but could have up to eleven, with no additional line rental so it's a cost-effective solution for us. The call quality is excellent and we're very pleased with the decision we made based on IT Services Support's recommendation."



New Midlands office provides new demo facilities

Our Midlands team has relocated to larger premises, in the same business complex in Redditch to accommodate a demo area for customers and future growth.

The new offices benefit from Spitfire's DualStream® SF (Synthetic Fibre) connectivity which combines a fibre circuit for data connectivity with a 2Mb SDSL circuit for Voice over IP. Should the SDSL circuit fail then the voice traffic will

automatically failover to the fibre circuit to ensure resilience for voice telephony and vice versa.

Peter Goddard, Midlands Partner Manager says, "There is growing interest in Ethernet connectivity, our SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service and SIP Trunks as a cost effective alternative to ISDN phone lines. Our new demo area will allow us to better showcase our services to our customers."

Staff News ...congratulations to



Tom &
Sophie
La Fôret



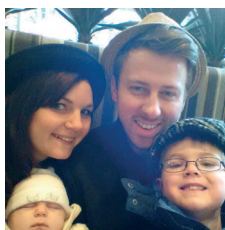
Darren
& Robyn
Conway



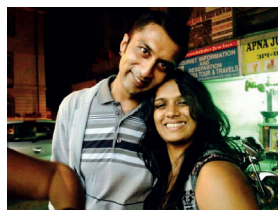
Laura & Ian Davidson

ENGAGEMENTS

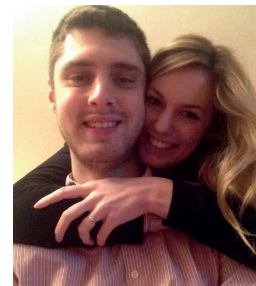
Sam Haria who proposed to his fiancée Sarah on a moonlit beach in India



James Davis with
partner Samantha,
Emmet and new
addition Grayson



Laura McMillan and
her fiancée Richard



Alex McCraith and
fiancée Charlie

BABIES

Rob Harridan
with partner
Sarah and
their new
daughter
Willow



The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Christmas Opening Times

Over the Christmas and New Year period our office opening times will differ slightly from our normal 8am – 8pm.

Wed 24th Dec	8am – 4pm
Thurs 25th Dec	Closed
Fri 26th Dec	Closed
Mon 29th Dec	9am – 5pm
Tues 30th Dec	9am – 5pm
Wed 31st Dec	9am – 5pm
Thurs 1st Jan	Closed

Outside of these hours please contact our duty manager on: 020 7582 4000

Win some celebratory winter 'warming' wine!

Simply send us your best caption for the photo on the left with your name, address and contact details.

Either e-mail it to competition@spitfire.co.uk, fax it to **020 7501 3001**, or post to the address below:

**Caption Competition,
Spitfire Network Services Ltd,
The Printworks,
139 Clapham Road,
London SW9 0HP.**

Competition closing date:
31 January 2015.